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Kurt Lewin Memorial Award Issue

Social Responsibility

By

George Brock Chisholm

and three memorial papers by
GORDON W. ALLPORT, EDWARD C. TOLMAN,
AND ALFRED J. MARROW

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The SPSSI is a group of several hundred social psychologists and allied social scientists with a particular interest in research on the psychological aspects of key social issues. The Society believes it has an obligation to help get scientific knowledge into the bloodstream of applied social action by building as many bridges as possible between theory and practice in group, community, national, and international living. This Journal has as its goal the communication of scientific findings and interpretations in a non-technical manner but without the sacrifice of professional standards.

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Preface

At their annual meeting in September 1947 the members of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues decided to honor the memory of their fellow member, Kurt Lewin, by creating an annual Kurt Lewin Memorial Award, probably for a period of ten years, through contributions by fellow-scientists and citizen-leaders who wished to collaborate in this memorial. The conditions of this Award as a stimulus to social scientific activity are described by Award Chairman Donald MacKinnon in his remarks which follow.

In this first number of the new Journal of Social Issues Supplement Series we are happy to publish the text of the first Kurt Lewin Memorial Lecture by Award-winner George Brock Chisholm, Director General of the World Health Organization.

Also it has seemed fitting to distribute to our readers at this time the three papers read by Gordon Allport of Harvard University, Edward Tolman of the University of California, and Alfred Marrow of the New School for Social Research and Harwood Corporation, on the occasion of the memorial meeting held by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues at the September 1947 annual meeting of the American Psychological Association.

The second Award will be made in September 1949 in Denver, Colorado, at the next meeting of the SPSSI and the American Psychological Association

RONALD LIPPITT,
General Editor

Contributions to the Lewin Award Fund are still needed to make possible the ten year program of awards. The Committee hopes for a broad base of participation in the Fund by social scientists and citizen-leaders who share a sense of dedication to the goals of scientific exploration and fact-guided action which Kurt Lewin represented. Checks should be made payable to the Lewin Award Fund, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and forwarded to Dr Eugene Hartley, Secretary-Treasurer, Department of Psychology, The City College, New York 31, New York.

KURT LEWIN MEMORIAL AWARD MEETING

Introductory Remarks by DONALD W. MACKINNON *

AS A YOUNG STUDENT, Kurt Lewin dreamed of becoming a physician. Having grown up in a small rural community, he planned, after taking his medical degree, to return there to minister to the needs of others. The love of his fellow beings which guided Lewin in the early planning of his life never diminished, but as we know, he became not a medical doctor but a great psychologist whose memory we honor today. As we look back on Kurt Lewin's life we gain a sense that the shift in his professional plans constituted no basic change in the direction of his life and the ultimate goals for which he lived. Rather, the young Lewin, developing and expressing in the stimulating atmosphere of the University, the rich potentialities of his mind and spirit, found a new path, one which took him into a wider life space than that which he might have known had he followed his first intentions. Perhaps, in part, it was this experience, as well as many of a similar kind which were to come later, that made Kurt Lewin so keenly aware of the problem of psychological direction.

This is not the occasion to review all that Kurt Lewin did as a psychologist, as humanitarian, as citizen of the world, but certainly those who knew him can never think of him apart from the many paths along which he was continuously and simultaneously, and always creatively moving. It is at once the paradox and tragedy of life that the more fully and richly it is lived, the greater the sense of loss and lack of closure when death cuts it off. Most of us here today will recall that day in February 1947 when, having heard that Kurt Lewin had died, we said to ourselves, "It cannot be."

The establishment of the Kurt Lewin Memorial Award was the result of a common resolve of those who had known Lewin personally and had worked with him, as well as of those who knew him only through his work, to do what they could to encourage and support those who would most effectively further the goals, both scientific and humanitarian, for which Kurt Lewin labored.

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues has established the Kurt Lewin Memorial Award to commemorate one who in his researches and in his professional activities exemplified the highest goals of the Society, and to encourage, through a recognition of their outstanding contributions, those who, like Kurt Lewin, in their work develop and integrate psychological research and social action.

It is especially fitting that this yearly award was established by SPSSI,

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* Chairman of Kurt Lewin Memorial Award Committee.

for Kurt Lewin, one of its early presidents, always labored indefatigably in its service and for the furtherance of its goals.

The Committee which was charged with the task of establishing the Award and of choosing the first recipient of it this year, and which has consisted of Doctors Gordon Allport, Ronald Lippitt, Alfred Marrow, Theodore Newcomb, Edward Tolman, and the present speaker, decided that a cash award which might be used to further the work of the recipient, rather than a medal, would be most nearly in keeping with Kurt Lewin's concern with the functionally valuable. Its only regret is that this award can be no more than a token of what the Society would wish to be able to give. It seemed to the Committee, too, that an award to the author of the best paper presented in competition with others would not be most congruent with Kurt Lewin's way of looking at things. It was their decision, therefore, in any one year to choose as the recipient of the Award a person who, either on the basis of some specific contribution or as the result of an outstanding total direction of work, had shown himself to be a significant contributor to at least one of the fields in which Kurt Lewin had worked. It was further decided that it should be a condition of the Award that, at the time of the annual meeting of the Society, the recipient deliver a Kurt Lewin Memorial Lecture.

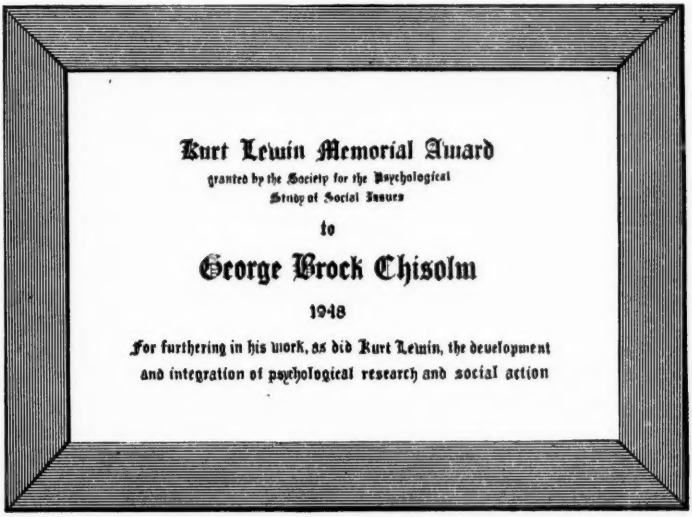
The first of these lectures is to be given this afternoon by Dr. George Brock Chisholm, Director General of the World Health Organization. Dr. Chisholm, like Kurt Lewin, decided as a young student that he wanted to become a physician. Unlike Lewin, he became one; but again like him, he has found increasingly that the path to his goals is neither simple nor single. Today he does not practice medicine with individual patients but with nations. The community in which he serves is the world. He, more than any other physician, is laying the foundation of a world-wide practice to create one world, healthy and at peace with itself.

Dr. Chisholm, a Canadian by birth, served his country in World Wars I and II. After receiving his medical degree from the University of Toronto in 1924, he did post-graduate work in England, and then for six years engaged in general medical practice in his native Oakville, Ontario. After periods of service on the staffs of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale and hospitals in London, he practiced psychological medicine in Toronto until 1940. His several positions in the Canadian Army during the Second World War included those of Commandant of the Northern Area, M.D. 2, General Staff Officer in Military Training, Director of Personnel Selection, Deputy Adjutant General with the rank of Major General, and from 1942 to 1944, Director General of Medical Services. He was then appointed to the post of Deputy Minister of Health in the Department of National Health and Welfare, a post which he held until July 1946 when he was elected Executive Secretary of the World Health Organization, Interim Commission. He is today Director General of the World Health Organization.

Dr. Chisholm was awarded a Military Cross and bar in the First World War and was made Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1943. He has held other posts in the service of his country and of various professional organizations. From 1942 to 1944 he was Chairman of the Canadian Medical Procurement and Assignment Board. He has served as President of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene and as Chairman of the Health Committee of the Canadian Youth Commission. In recognition of his services for war veterans he has received the Lasker Award for Outstanding Contribution to Veterans' Rehabilitation.

Dr. Chisholm is the author of many technical and popular articles, though he is probably best known for his work on *Morale*, 1940, and for his William Alanson White Memorial Lectures of 1945 entitled the *Re-establishment of Peacetime Society*.

It is my great privilege, Dr. Chisholm, on behalf of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues to present to you the first Kurt Lewin Memorial Award with this scroll which reads:


Kurt Lewin Memorial Award

granted by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues

to

George Brock Chisolm

1948

For furthering in his work, as did Kurt Lewin, the development and integration of psychological research and social action

It now gives me great pleasure to present to you Dr. Chisholm, the first recipient of the Lewin Award, who has chosen for his Kurt Lewin Memorial Lecture the title of *Social Responsibility*.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By George Brock Chisholm

If Kurt Lewin had done nothing else during his too short lifetime but provide the amount of inspiration he did for the psychological study of social issues, his should be judged a highly successful life. Add to that all his influence toward sanity, and the infectiousness of his maturity, understanding, and generous tolerance of human frailties, and we clearly draw the picture of a man, truly a leader in terms appropriate to his time. Kurt Lewin was an explorer and pioneer in fields as beset with pitfalls for the unwary or ill equipped as ever were polar seas or tropical jungles. The reluctance of all of us human beings to know ourselves, the aggressions released by any attempt to help us to know ourselves truly, the antagonisms with which we defend our imbedded original premises, no matter how demonstrably fallacious they may be, are well known to all of us who have learned the lessons of the last half-century of pioneering work in these areas. Still, however, and probably for a long time to come, these human reactions are the great barriers to human progress in those very directions which are of the greatest importance to the whole race. In this area of human evolution there is still great need for unselfish devotion, for dedication to high principles, even sometimes for a degree of martyrdom.

Kurt Lewin, and his co-workers in the USA and in England, have begun a process which should eventually contribute greatly to bringing the light of objectivity into the whole field of human relations.

Up until recently, through many generations of development, scientific progress has been almost entirely confined to those fields which would contribute directly to commercial or military advantage in a world functioning on the principal of competitive survival. Only in the last few years has it become clear to the people in all countries who are capable of thinking independently of the hysteria of the media of mass communication, that this old method of competitive survival has become synonymous with racial suicide. Under the pressure of the anxiety engendered by this awareness the physical scientists have begun to show signs of developing some social responsibility, and the human scientists some evidences of concern about the immediacy and importance of world problems of human relations and inter-human communication. The recent International Congress on Mental Health with its main theme of study, "Mental Health and World Citizenship" has been a most encouraging sign of this awakening concern. More than 5000 people, psychologists, psychiatrists, social anthropologists, sociologists, educators and others participated actively in the preparation for that congress, many of them over periods of a year or more. There is no mistaking the urgency of the call which awakened

this significant response, and brought together in London more than 2000 people from 54 countries, to hear each other's ideas and share their experiences.

These are some of the signs of a changing orientation of science. In the past science, in its purer forms, has been content to add to the sum of human knowledge; in its less disinterested preoccupations it has added to the wealth of those who already were in a financial position to subsidize scientific research—theoretically all to the ultimate advantage of the human race. Only recently scientists themselves have begun to recognize that any increase of knowledge does not at all necessarily work to the advantage of the human race and to be willing though reluctantly, to accept some responsibility for what is done with the knowledge they uncover. However, other agencies, civil or military, are not generally by any means ready to admit scientists to these sacred areas where business and politics worship the old gods of profit, prestige and power. Generally, they are not yet ready to see that the exclusion of scientific attitudes from the field of human relations, while employing the full strength of scientific method in the material fields, may well destroy the human race in the not distant future. In spite of this natural reluctance to admit continuing failure and to call for help, and the inevitable defensive disparaging of the scientific attitude at policy levels, it becomes increasingly clear that the designing, building and operating of modern civilization requires different techniques from those of a generation ago. The builder of a prairie schooner is not qualified by his experience to design or build a turbo-jet aeroplane, nor could any of his contemporaries fly it. Many of our socio-political methods are reminiscent of the prairie schooner and pony express days, though the scientists have ushered in an era of instantaneous world communication, and potential world destruction.

To change the metaphor—our civilization, like a great ship, driven by the enormous power of its scientific development, is rushing on into treacherous and unreliably charted seas. The equipment of our pilots is far short of the best available. Their principles, their instruments, and even their charts are commonly inherited from previous generations and founded on folk-lore, superstition, faiths inculcated in childhood, prejudice or even, much worse, on local political advantage. It is a fact that in other fields of governmental responsibility the best available experts are invariably employed to design, construct and operate, whether it be a dam, a ship, an aeroplane, agricultural production, atomic bombs, a financial or accounting system or anything else, except only in the field of human relations. There any kind of person may be used. Commonly lawyers are given these responsibilities: their training is in rules and precedent, one of the worse possible technical trainings for this work. Sometimes soldiers are taken from their normal business to be put in charge of our relations with other peoples; their training is in strategical and tactical manoeuvering to gain predetermined ends at the expense of an enemy.

The whole military training pre-supposes an opponent and teaches how to circumvent and defeat him, not how to cooperate with other kinds of people who are often as difficult and sure they are right as we are ourselves. Clearly military training is also one of the worst possible for this work. The training of business men, to make profits, or the training of the old-time diplomats in gentlemanly behaviour and the classics, are also obviously inadequate to the needs of interhuman relations on a world scale. It is true that a certain number of economists and sociologists in recent years have been given some work to do in the international field, but usually only as technicians on secretariats, to carry out the orders of governing bodies, rarely on national and intergovernmental policy levels. Also the training of sociologists and economists tends to concern itself almost exclusively with the study of human institutions and their functioning, not the study of human beings and their inter-relationships.

The situation is illustrated by a glance at the position in just one of the agencies of the United Nations. For instance, while the Constitution of the World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" and states that "the healthy development of the child is of basic importance" and "the ability to live harmoniously in a changing total environment is essential to such development," at the First World Health Assembly, attended by some 68 nations of which 55 are full members, so far as I have been able to find out there were no psychologists, no social anthropologists and only one neuro-psychiatrist included in national delegations totalling about two hundred and fifty.

The one neuro-psychiatrist was on the delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. No other government felt the need of any technical information or advice in the field of mental health or human relations. This is a highly significant and important fact.

Of course, it is not to be taken for granted that any particular type of technical training now being given at any university would be useful specifically in this enormously important field of inter-human relations. The curricula in political science courses seem to be woefully inadequate to these responsibilities, as do those in psychology, psychiatry or sociology.

It appears that the idea that the field of inter-human relations should be a major area for man's study and endeavour is not yet sufficiently accepted for any university to have developed a teaching course to train this type of expert. It may well be asked whether such a course could be given, whether there are people capable of teaching a course. It is clear that something is known of the subject; social psychologists, social anthropologists and psychiatrists have been working in that area, at least to some extent, for many years. It does appear however, that their experiences have not properly been brought together into teachable form. Here is a job of the greatest possible urgency. It is to be hoped that enough demand will arise, from enough places, to insure that the World Federa-

tion for Mental Health, and the World Health Organization, will quickly undertake developmental work of this kind. The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues could perform most valuable services in stimulating and helping to guide such developments.

It may well be claimed that all that is needed is the universal application of the ancient injunction to "love thy neighbour as thyself" which derives from the deep gregarious instinct of man, and has been promulgated by most of the great religions. In practice such love has commonly been restricted, according to a locally acceptable definition of "neighbour," to the other members of the tribe, or the colour, racial, religious or political group. The requirements for maturity and world-citizenship may be called the Christian virtues, or the Buddhist virtue or the Hindu virtues, or the Mohammedan virtues, or the Confucian virtues, or may be ascribed to many other religions with about equal validity. They could even be called the "psychological virtues."

The catch in this old and widely supported injunction "love thy neighbour as thyself" is in the last two words. The uncomfortable fact is that very few people indeed can love themselves in a healthy natural way which tolerantly accepts all their own human urges as normal and inevitable aspects of the healthily functioning man or woman. Most of us, by being civilized too early or to forcibly, have been driven to believe that our natural human urges are "bad" "not nice," "wicked," "sinful" or whatever the local equivalent may be. This is the dreadfully damaging concept of "original sin," which really only states that babies are not born civilized according to the local customs of the natives. In this latter form the statement is, of course, true and quite harmless, as long as it is understood by the child that he is not supposed to have been born civilized, and by permission of all legal systems may take plenty of time about reaching that exalted state. Unfortunately this is not understood by most children; they have been convicted of sin, believe they are "bad" and consequently deeply despise, distrust, and even hate themselves. The anxiety engendered motivates the projection of these feelings of despising, distrust and hate on to other people, the neighbours, though usually distinguishable from oneself by some recognizable difference of race, colour, creed, economic status and politics.

The consequent aggressive feelings against such people are experienced as virtuous. It appears that a system which imposes an early belief in one's own sinfulness, or unacceptability in one's natural state, with its consequent inferiority feelings and anxiety, must be harmful to interhuman relationships and to the ability of the human race to survive in the kind of world this has become.

Unfortunately the concept of "sin" is, under one name or another, very firmly entrenched throughout much of the world. Later in life the feelings which go with this childhood condemnation, commonly are attached to thinking or other activities which would be disapproved by prevailing

authority. Instead of "bad" one may be reproached with the terms "communist," "reactionary," "Nazi," "nigger-lover," or any of many other epithets. They all signify disapproval and are supposed to produce feelings of guilt and shame. This method of control has been used by all authoritarian systems throughout history to discourage any attempts to change or develop local concepts or customs. This whole method of control should be exposed and combatted by all scientific or mature people.

. Let us look briefly at some of the immediate requirements that are now so obvious that no further research is needed to identify them. Much reliable work of recent years has indicated clearly that successful human relations start in infancy. We all know that babies need, not just want, but need, completely uncritical love, love whose manifestations are quite independent of the babies' behaviour. In this situation only can the most desirable feelings of being wanted and loved and of "belonging" arise.

It is also well known that this "belonging" feeling, in a successful developmental process, should spread gradually to include family, friends, and fellow citizens, and that in the little world this has become, it cannot any longer safely stop at national boundaries as it reasonably satisfactorily could until just recently.

Now the world must have, and soon, large numbers of people in every country who have grown emotionally beyond national boundaries and are sufficiently mature to be capable of being "world citizens." Up until now very few people indeed in any country, have really developed emotionally even to a truly national degree of maturity. Such development to a national level, requires an equal degree of concern for the welfare of *all* the kinds of people within the nation, irrespective of colour, racial origin, religion, education, social or economic group—or even political party. Few people have reached even this stage of development, and yet only through this stage is it possible to develop to a degree of maturity in which there is a "belonging" feeling in relation to all peoples, and an equal concern for the welfare of all of them. Very few such people have been developed but it is clear that they are the prototype of what the world must have, in large numbers, before there can be any reasonable degree of assurance that the human race will survive for even another generation.

How can the development of this "belonging" feeling be ensured for as many as possible of the children now beginning their lives? It is already clear that they must experience unquestioning and uncritical love, and that they must be free of a "conviction of sin" but what else must they have and against what else must they be protected? What are the needs of the growing child of school age, of the adolescent, of the young adult, which need to be met by the community in order that the best possible opportunity to reach real maturity may be ensured?

Next, the responsibility of meeting these needs must be broken down and allocated to the appropriate elements of the community. What do

mothers, to be successful mothers, need to know about these matters, and how should they apply their knowledge? What about fathers? What training should they have for their job? Who should provide the training for mothers and fathers, and when? Perhaps the best answer to this last question is easy; training of mothers and fathers ideally should begin when they themselves are children, but clearly we cannot wait for another two generations. This job must be got at at every possible point of contact. Margaret Mead recently stated that even grandparents can still learn. Many of them certainly can if someone will help them a little, and they are given a chance to recognize their responsibilities.

What do school teachers need of this type of knowledge and who is responsible for seeing that they get it? What are the responsibilities of town and city councils, of other local authorities, and of state, provincial or federal governments, and how are local and national institutions to be made aware of these responsibilities and induced to accept them? What kinds of people are needed locally on boards of education or school boards? What should their qualifications be? What do members of city councils need to know about the development of children so they may carry their share of this responsibility? Is it conceivable that it could be generally enough accepted that members of parliaments and congressmen, even senators, need a certain amount of knowledge in this most important field of their responsibilities to the citizens who elect them?

What should be the qualifications of legislators to be able so to direct the affairs of a country, particularly in relation to other countries, that the citizens whose lives are in their hands may feel some assurance that they know what they are doing and are working for the good of all the people in the world, the only basis on which it is reasonable to hope that the human race, and our own children, may survive?

Here are a few of the questions that need to be answered, not by individual research reported in technical language to scientific societies, but by co-operative work eventually reported in non-technical language to the people of the world, through their common channels of communication, the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies. Much of this has already been begun. The Statement by the International Preparatory Commission for the International Congress on Mental Health is a notable contribution to these problems. Another significant move has been made by UNESCO's project on Intergroup Tensions, from which has come recently a very valuable report. Of course these efforts, while tremendously important, are only beginnings. One of their great values is the indication they give that there are at least a few mature people, capable of co-operation in this most difficult of all scientific fields, in many countries.

A few fully mature people, even in the right places, are not enough. Even if all the councils of the United Nations and of its agencies were composed of such people, which they are not, they could still be only partly effective. The United Nations and its agencies are not run by

their secretariats. All policies are decided by the governing bodies, executive boards, councils, etc., all composed of national delegations. Even now many national delegations cannot behave in as civilized, mature and co-operative ways as they know they should do, and as they would like to do because of the certainty that such civilized, mature and co-operative action would not be acceptable to their own governments or political chiefs. A national delegation cannot misrepresent its own people at home. If the majority of the population of a country is insular, or prejudiced, or antagonistic against some other nation, or aggressive or just plain ignorant, its delegations in the councils of the nations must reflect those qualities in order to keep their jobs.

The United Nations cannot be blamed for the muddles they have made or their failures in human relations. These muddles and failures are the direct results of the muddled thinking of the people of the nations, of their prejudices, their unreasoned anxieties and hates, and their aggressive pressures. This situation cannot be cured, nor much improved from within the United Nations itself. The degree of our own infantility is illustrated by our desire to leave these responsibilities to our "father-equivalent," the government of our particular country or the United Nations. The reform must take place within the nations. Nor can such reforms stem from the national capitals, from the parliaments and congresses. No one can do this so necessary job but the people themselves, in the villages, towns, and cities of every country.

There is now only one basic importance in the world, the one importance on which the very existence of the race depends, the emotional relationship between the people of the world. Every political action in every country should be taken in the light of that fact. Whoever helps to elect anyone to any public office, in any country, on any other basis than his ability to improve the human relations of the people of the world, gambles with his own life and the lives of his children, against, it may be, his hope of a job or of lowered taxes or of the satisfaction he might get in being on the winning side in a battle between political parties. Any or all of these things, weighed against the lives of the hundreds of millions of people the next world war, if it comes, will destroy, make a poor bet.

Our own personal responsibility to our fellow humans is clear. Whoever is reasonably informed in any aspect of human emotional-mental-social development, whoever can do something to clarify thinking even a little and very locally, whoever can help to remove a prejudice, soften a hate, increase the total of understanding and tolerance in the world, by that knowledge, training, insight or ability is made responsible to do what he can all possible places. Research is valuable but many remain sterile for long periods and time is short. Erudite papers read to technical gatherings and published in technical journals have their important place, but may be futile unless appropriate action follows. Responsibility of the

informed and technically qualified is to all people, not just to the enlightened.

The really noble example given by Kurt Lewin, should continue to be an inspiration. His work and enthusiasm still do and will contribute greatly to present and future developments in the field of human relations. Some part of it can be carried on by every one of us.

Whoever can get at people in homes or schools or universities, in Parent-Teacher Associations, or Home and School Clubs, or youth groups, in churches or service clubs, by talking or writing, through lectures, radio, newspapers, magazines, books or any other channels of communication, is obligated, by his ability, to serve the human race where he can, to the limit of his equipment. Dare any of us say that he or she can do nothing about the desperate need of the world for better human relations?

THE GENIUS OF KURT LEWIN*

By Gordon W. Allport

In the words of the poet, genius is "heaven born and seldom seen." Perhaps because it is so, psychologists, busily burdened with the mundane and the average, have given the subject little attention. Our most fruitful approach to date has been in terms of the intelligent quotient; but its insufficiency is evident when we consider the work of a man whose originality seems to remove him from all comparison scales. We do not know what Kurt Lewin's IQ may have been, but this measure if known would not be relevant to an understanding of the unique pattern of his accomplishment.

Greatness seems always to beget controversy. In psychology the most controversial figure in our times is Freud, incomparably the most original and important. After Freud, we think of McDougall and Kurt Lewin, both influential systematists, and for that very reason controversial. McDougall had the disadvantage of defending a dualism and nativism that were caught in the ebbing tide of intellectual fashion. Lewin had the advantage of rising with the flood tide of configurationism and an awakening social conscience. If less controversial than McDougall, he was yet rejected by a small minority of psychologists, for the most part rigid methodologists and mathematicians, who were offended by his latitudinarian incursions into their domain.

Although we have little empirical guidance in the matter, I venture to suggest certain conditions that seem always in the case of genius to converge. I do not pretend that these are the sufficient conditions of genius, but only that they seem to be some of the necessary conditions.

1. In the first place, the work of a genius seems always marked by a certain *intellectual solitude.*

It sounds strange to say that Kurt Lewin, who was surely the most affable and friendly of men, was in any respect solitary. Yet we mark his avoidance of the well-worn paths of psychological science, and his apparent compulsion to strike off by himself. I recall spending much time with him discussing the concept of attitudes, trying to persuade him to accord it a more systematic place in his theoretical doctrine. Others, I know, urged him to import into his system various psychoanalytic concepts. Characteristically he gave the petitioners a most considerate hearing and declared there was much truth in their argument, but then he would plead in his peculiarly winning manner, "Now, you don't mind do you, if I represent the same phenomenon in a slightly different way?"

* reprinted from *Journal of Personality*, 1947, 16, No. 1, with the permission of Duke University Press.

Whereupon, more often than not, he would draw a Jordan curve. His restless intelligence seemed continuously to put forth pseudopods to engulf the thought of the other. But the prize, once grasped, was forthwith assimilated into the parent body of field theory.

In no respect was his intellectual solitude asocial. On the contrary, more than most original thinkers, he exposed himself to the benefits of social facilitation. While deriving much stimulation from others he sparked back with ideas in such a lively and radiant manner that inevitably he won a circle of followers who for a time constituted a closely knit team of like-minded investigators. Yet Lewin had no desire to found a separate school of psychology, and—in spite of the originality of his thought and the devotion of his youthful collaborators—finally succeeded in avoiding the trap of separatism. The phrase "Lewin and his students" was heard more often during the few years immediately preceding and following his immigration to America in 1932 than during the last decade of his life. As his own interests branched out into industrial psychology and public service, and as his students took up important positions in war research, in clinics, and in community life, we heard less about an "inner circle" and felt more widely in our national and professional life the wholesome impact of their work. Furthermore, many Lewinian concepts that at first seemed esoteric came soon to saturate the discourse of standard psychology. The dynamic power of unfinished tasks, escape from the field, the level of aspiration, differentiation, the detour are a few of the many concepts that general psychology today has widely adopted.

When he took cognizance of the work of others, his response, as I have said, was an urge to reshape this thought into his own expanding system. Some methodologists with a similar urge show themselves intolerant and snappish in dealing with their opponents. Lewin was never ungracious, nor did he feel the compulsion to single out villains whom he might ridicule and deride in order to highlight the superiority of his own thought. When he felt it necessary to condemn class theory in order to clarify the merits of field theory, he took as the representative villain nothing more personal than "the Aristotelian mode of thought."

2. Without the solitude the brings detachment from the folkways there could be no marked *originality*, which, of course, is the central attribute of genius. Though of necessity Lewin built with the psychological, sociological, and mathematical blocks that he found available, the structure that he erected is startling in its originality.

The problem that has most perplexed psychological scientists is that of relatedness, of the interdependence of parts within a whole. It is precisely this problem to which Lewin devoted himself. In Lippitt's words, "Although his life line could be analyzed in terms of many themes, I believe the most persistent and central was his continuous scientific study of the mysteries of interdependence in the successful functioning of individual personality, of group life, and of science as an on-going opera-

tion made up of many subparts."[1] At various times psychology has tried to handle problems of interrelatedness with the aid of correlational methods, including factor analysis, with the postulation of habit hierarchies and integration, with the concept of form-qualities, with profiles. The Gestalt movement carried with it the stronger assertion that interdependence is in reality a matter of wholeness and not of relations. But in the fields of personality and social behavior, the Gestalt movement provided no concepts as useful and as embracing as Lewin's twofold representation of the person as a differentiated region, and as a point region in his life space.

To trace the history of any department of science rapidly is a dangerous thing, for epochs intertwine and each age has its dissenting voices. But in order to indicate the nature of Lewin's originality in the field of social psychology, let me suggest that this discipline has come through three fairly distinct epochs, and now, thanks largely to him, is entering a fourth, more promising, period of development.

For many hundreds of years, and extending into the present century, we have had simplicist systems of social theory. All these systems were rationally evolved, with no more empiricism to support them than the selective perceptions of their authors. One mental mechanism, or a narrowly conceived cluster of mechanisms, a kind of *deus ex machina,* underlay the social theories of Hobbes, Comte, Mill, Spencer, Bagehot, Tarde, Le Bon, Ross, McDougall, and many other writers whose principal work was published prior to 1910.

There followed the individualistic era, ushered in with McDougall's simple and sovereign doctrine of instincts. The individual was the center of the social universe. This emphasis led to the period of experimentation that dealt with social influence upon the sensory and higher mental processes of individuals. Behaviorism aided the conception by fragmenting the environment into an infinite number of conditioned stimuli to act as instigators to an infinite number of reflex tracts. In the midst of this period McDougall attempted to escape from the solipsism he himself helped create by postulating a "group mind" in close analogy to the individual mind. The very term "group mind" as used by him, and by many of his predecessors, betrays preoccupation with the individual model. It was for other reasons, however, that the concept was rejected. It was not in line with the extreme pluralism of the period; it was not fruitful experimentally; it was stained with European metaphysics. The individualistic era was principally a time when the methods and concepts of experimental psychology were in the ascendancy and when individual mental operations, interpreted with the aid of statistical method, were held to explain adequately all social behavior. Freudianism with its

[1] R. Lippitt, Kurt Lewin, 1890-1947; Adventures in the exploration of interdependence, *Sociometry,* 1947, 10, 87. This reference likewise contains a bibliography of Lewin's writings.

highly individualistic emphasis was easily assimilated into this line of thought.

Two decades ago a reaction set in when both sociologists and anthropologists spoke up vigorously concerning the importance of status, role, caste, and pattern, and of the significance of the *situation,* both immediate and remote, in determining present conduct. To be sure, sociologists and anthropologists had been speaking in these terms for many years, but it was not until the departmental walls in our universities were weakened that their voices were heard by psychologists across the corridor. There came a time when many of the same psychologists who had been speaking in individualistic terms swung to the other extreme. It became fashionable for them now to talk in terms of patterns of culture, to assert that personality is naught but man's social stimulus value, and to solve the mysteries of character by invoking the mores of the "upper-upper" or the "lower-middle."

To some extent the influence of all three of these periods is persisting today, especially of course, of the third period. But it is at this point that we are beginning to sense the significance of the Lewinian influence which represents a better-balanced fusion of the individualistic and social emphasis. At first sight, we are inclined to brush aside Lewin's favorite formula, $B = f(P, E)$, as a truism. Has not every psychologist from the beginning of time agreed that it is always the dynamics of the person and the dynamics of the environment that unite to determine behavior? Probably so—with their lips. But even while we agree in principle, individualists among us insist that P must dominate the scene, with the past history of the person assuming the all-determining role. Culturalists among us strive to minimize P and to exalt E. Lewin points to the middle course, and advises that we resolve our dispute by taking the situational field as it is viewed by the participants themselves. When we do so we find that culture patterns, caste, role, and status are indeed decisive in conduct, but only in so far as these categories of social structure are actually transmuted into effective forces within the behavorial environment, through the needs and perceptual processes of the individual.

"Systems under tension" are the whole story, not the cultural stimuli that we think ought to be operating, nor the past habits that might be supposed decisive. The present tensions include the psychological past so far as it is in fact relevant to present behavior; they containt likewise all cultural and environmental pressures to which the person is in fact responding. This conceptual approach, we know, has fruitful application to an immensely wide variety of problems, ranging from the person acting as a member of a small face-to-face group to the class of nations.

I do not believe the predictive power of field-theoretical formulations has been compared experimentally with the predictive power of individualistic and cultural formulations. If it were, we might well find Lewin's superiority in prediction demonstrated, for the simple reason that he is

able to take more parameters simultaneously into account. During the war, whenever our paths crossed, I made it a practice to ask his predictions. I now wish I had kept a record of his remarkable accuracy. His only substantial blunder, I believe, was his failing to foresee the Battle of the Bulge and its delaying effect on the end of the war. In November, 1944, sensing the intensification of the field forces then at work, he predicted the total collapse of Germany not later than February, 1945. VE Day actually came in May. I mention this astuteness, not, of course, as validation of his general theories, but because I do believe long experience thinking in terms of fields did sharpen his perception of the manifold and interrelated happenings in the complex world about him.

Returning to the fourth period of social psychology which seems now to be emerging, we ask what its leading characteristics are. First, it reflects a better-balanced view of the combined operation of the personal and social determinants of conduct. Second, it has the ability to handle simultaneously more variables, historical and contemporaneous, than before. Thirdly, as a result, it displays heightened skill in dealing with actual full-bodied group phenomena. These improvements, I submit, are due more to the work of Kurt Lewin than to the work of any other single social scientist.

His originality ascends high into the realm of theory even while it digs deeply into the practical. Inventor of "topological" and "vectorial" psychology, he is also the inventor of "action research." To his mind, though not always to the minds of others, the two were inseparable. He himself tells how his early experimental findings in his research on association drove him to recognize that the central datum in psychology is the "system under tension." For the last twenty-five years of his life he felt compelled both to conceptualize in formal terms the forces and directions and displacements involved in such systems, and to explore them in their concrete manifestations. Virtually all of his researches, he said, grew out of "certain theoretical expectations." "They have been designed to prove or to disprove certain assumptions."[2] Systematist that he was, he sought the continuity of phenomena from the smallest experimental detail to the properties of hodological space. I do not believe that the time has come to pass judgment upon his bold venture into geometric formalism. If its merits are finally established, Lewin will have moved us far toward the unification of psychological and mathematical science. If not, his audacity will inspire some genius of the future. Columbus, we recall, did not in his voyages of discovery reach the mainland of America. His followers did.

Even with our present limited perspective we know how much richer we are through Lewin's legacy of brilliant concepts experimentally

[2]A self-told account of the development of his researches and theories is contained in *Studies in topological and vector psychology: I.* Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1940.

derived. I have mentioned the Zeigarnik effect, the level of aspiration, differentiation, detour, escape from the field. We might add to the list: time perspective, cognitive structure, levels of reality, barrier, rigidity, satiation, life space, marginal affiliation, group decision, and still others. Most of these concepts are his own invention; where they are not, it was his work that established them as standard tools for psychological theorizing.

3. Along with intellectual solitariness and originality, we must list a negative aspect of genius, ordinarily overlooked in discussions of the subject. Poincaré spoke of the long periods of fallowness and confusion that lay between his bursts of insight. All who knew Kurt Lewin learned to pay close attention to his lively stream of speech. Often it seemed confused. But it was a rare conversation when the listener did not take away at least one idea of power and brilliance, even though the discourse to which he listened may have been neither orderly nor consecutive. In his writing Lewin was more lucid, but even here his strength lay in the total impact of his communication rather than in quotable phrases or crisp climax. He may have been handicapped when, in middle age, he was forced to adopt a new language as a medium for his complex thought. But the situation seems not to have been markedly different in his German days. The story is told of an American student in Berlin who asked a German student how to translate *Aufforderungscharakter* into English. The student replied, "Search me; I can't even translate it into German."

4. *Hard work* is an ingredient of genius. The capacity of great scientists and artists to labor inhumanly long hours is legendary. We cannot yet calculate the ratio of inspiration and of perspiration that enters into productive careers. Lewin was remarkably energetic and apparently tireless. Especially in the last years of his life, his deep concern for the state of the world led him to spend his vitality upon numerous committees, government research projects, in lecturing and community service, carrying these activities in addition to his teaching, writing, directing of research, money raising, and administration.

5. From a list of the determinants of genius one dare not omit the *situational factor,* least of all since it is the determinant upon which Lewin himself would chiefly insist. His first two published works appeared during World War I. One of these, like the early studies of the Gestalt psychologists, dealt with perception, specifically with camouflage and the war landscape. The other adumbrated his later interest in motivation, expressing, as it did, deep dissatisfaction with the associationism of Ebbinghaus and G. E. Müller. The world came to know him through the brilliant series of twenty studies published between 1926 and 1930 in the *Psychologische Forschung* under the general title of *Untersuchungen zur Handlungs-und Affekt-Psychologie.* Easily the most exciting event of the International Congress of Psychology in 1929 at New Haven was Lewin's simple but instructive film that showed an 18-month-

old child learning to sit down on a stone. To some American psychologists this ingenious film was decisive in forcing a revision of their own theories of the nature of intelligent behavior and of learning. Other Lewinian films from this German period are classics of the same order. During the 1920's we could certainly call him a dynamic psychologist, a child psychologist, an experimentalist but not yet a social psychologist.

The macabre events of history forced him to seek refuge in this country. Their effect upon him was to shift his interest vigorously to the field of social relations. Shortly before he died I asked him how and when he first became interested in the psychological problems of democracy. He told me that this interest was a direct result of his centering his life space in America. Throughout his earlier years he had concerned himself with liberal thought, with progressive education, with the philosophy of politics. But in retrospect he saw that German liberalism was marked by abstract discussion and unproductive effort. It was an illuminating experience for him to see democracy in action in the United States and to ponder the reasons why it functioned more successfully here than in Germany. He said to me, "I was deeply impressed by the open, easy-going give-and-take of American life. I became convinced that the American ideals are the best ideals for human society. I am now a citizen of the United States." He set for himself the task of learning the conditions under which group discussion leads to wholesome action, and the principles involved in delegating responsibility so that each individual may grow through participating in his own destiny.

The first productions in the final period of his life were brilliant contributions to the vexing subject of ethnic and national differences.[3] Soon afterward he inaugurated the renowned experiments upon autocratic and democratic group atmospheres. The world-situation set for him his problems. America provided him the opportunity to work on them, the appreciation that means incentive, and the criticism that corrects. Yet the situational factor, auspicious and determinative though it was, would not have been effective unless it had acted upon a humane and gifted individual, abounding in energy, in compassion, and in zeal for discovery. His own past history, including the suffering of his fellow-Jews, was an important element in the situation. Behavior, verily, is a function of the environment *and* the person.

6. A final mark of genius is *tenacious devotion to one or more nonhedonistic values*. We are accustomed to celebrate the single-mindedness of the scientific genius in his pursuit of truth. But in recent painful years we have learned that truth alone is an insufficient value for human survival. In social psychology, for example, it is not enough to find out why people in national groups behave as they do. We have suddenly come

[3] Psychosociological problems of a minority group, *Charact. & Pers.*, 1935, 3, 175-178; Some social psychological differences between the United States and Germany, *Charact. & Pers.*, 1936, 4, 265-293.

to realize that we must discover how they may learn to behave better. (For unless they soon behave better, there may be no groups to study or no science to do the studying.) Kurt Lewin did not hesitate to make the required value judgment. To him the better life meant always the democratic life, the humane life, the humorous and kindly life. As a truth-seeker we honor him; but as a humanist, whole-souled in his loyalty to the values of democracy—which he claimed to have found among us—we remember him with special gratitude and affection.

KURT LEWIN—1890-1947*

By Edward C. Tolman

Psychology has suffered a tragic loss in the death of Kurt Lewin and for those of us who counted him as friend the sense of bereavement does not lessen. Lewin's contributions to the problems of individual and group psychology were so great and his personality so vivid that any attempt such as this to do justice to him and his work within brief compass can provide but the merest suggestions as to where his true greatness lay.

Kurt Lewin grew up on a farm in Germany. He received his Ph.D. at the University of Berlin in 1914 and served for four years in the first World War rising from private to officer. He returned to the University after the war as instructor in philosophy. In 1926 he became professor of philosophy and psychology.

After several years of working on the more conventional problems of perception and learning within a fairly classical associationistic framework he turned, more or less under the impetus of Gestalt principles, to problems of motivation, and in 1926 he published the first of that series of some 20 brilliant articles by himself and his students which appeared in *Psychologische Forschung* under the superordinate title—*'Untersuchungen zur Handlungs-und Affekt Psychologie,'*—'Investigations into the Psychology of Behavior and Emotion.' Here most of the basic concepts later so famous first appeared; those of the life space, of tension systems, of fluid vs. rigid boundaries, of valences and forcefields, of barriers, of space of free movement, of power fields, of cognitive structure, of reality and irreality levels, of psychical satiation and of the level of aspiration. And here also the distinction between 'systematic' (*i.e.*, dynamic or field) laws and 'historical' laws was first presented.

Perhaps the traits most obviously characteristic of Lewin were intellectual keenness and originality, courage and zest. They were apparent in his daily contacts as well as in the unfailing enthusiasm and energy with which he met every challenge to new scientific activity. These traits could be exhausting and overwhelming to those of us of more pedestrian temper. But they flashed as beacons to guide us.

More important still perhaps was his essential humanity. It was this humanity (itself an outgrowth perhaps of his basic identification with the Jews and their age-long problems) which caused almost all of his scientific career to be concerned primarily with the problems of motivation —the motivation of individuals and the motivation of groups. And it was this humanity which led him to stress throughout the 'situational,' as contrasted with the 'historical' determiners of motivation. He had, I

* reprinted from the *Psychological Review*, 1948, 55, No. 1, with permission of the American Psychological Association.

suspect, a tremendous faith in the potentialities of every human being. He felt that, if we could but correctly conceptualize the a-historical, situational factors determinative of behavior, then we could manipulate these contemporaneous situational factors and produce the sort of behavior which all persons of good will would desire. If we can but discover the 'systematic laws,' the laws of the 'pure case,' *i.e.*, those laws whereby a given 'life-space' inevitably produces a given behavior, then we can know how to change persons and groups to remake their behavior according to our heart's desires. In short, it was his humanity, I believe, which would not allow him to dwell for long on any considerations other than those of the manipulable present. His emphasis on the a-historical was a humanitarian as much as an intellectual need.

Although he did not talk much about it, save to his intimates, all of us sensed his never-tiring efforts and his tremendous giving of himself and of his energies to relatives, friends and other subjects of Nazi persecution. One could but be amazed at the energy and fortitude with which he did all he could to try to circumvent these personal and group tragedies while continuing with unrelenting vigor his scientific investigations which would, he felt, help in the end to mitigate such social horrors.

Lewin did not, of course, actually deny the historical, developmental influences acting upon the individual, and indeed by his diagrams of the structure of the inner life space with its interconnecting tension-compartments and its surrounding and interacting *Motorik*, he actually offered a brilliant conceptual scheme for representing the end results of such historical, developmental determinations. But he himself seems never to have wanted to dwell for long upon such developmental considerations. He did not deny the value of accounts of personality differences by means of depth psychology, but he considered these accounts not yet ripe for intensive investigation. We must first develop good systematic constructs before we devote too much energy to an effort to establish the more superficial historical laws.

Thus he wrote in connection with an analysis of the differences between the American and the German personalities:

"In other words, there should be a 'systematic explanation,' besides the 'historical' one, namely, an explanation of how these different parts and properties can exist within one concrete social whole. As in psychology, in sociology both the historical and the systematic question 'why' is important, and neither question is finally to be solved without the other. Yet they are considerably different from the logical point of view, and the *systematic explanation has often to be considered first.*" (Italics mine.) [1]

It was in this same essay that he suggested that in Americans (at least in the Americans whom he knew) there is a greater communicability and publicness of most of the outer layers of the personality, and in the Germans a greater impermeability of the surface layers which, however,

[1] K. Lewin, Some social-psychological differences between the United States and Germany. *Character & Pers.*, 1936, 4, p. 278f.

if once penetrated, break all the way through. This means both greater ease and friendliness in ordinary social relations, and greater contact with immediate practical problems in the American, and a more private and idea-centered life in the German. I cite this distinction because Lewin himself was, or became, so very American in the terms of such an analysis. He was so astoundingly open to communication with others, so free from rank or status considerations. He set up no barriers of formality to protect any save his innermost layers. In one respect, however, he remained in some degree definitely German, namely, in his concern with ideas, with theory. Yet this attitude of his toward theory became itself, I believe, but a happy compromise between the German and the American. He stuck to his theoretical guns, but he had a sense of humor and he had flexibility. In the most basic sense he was pragmatic. Indeed, I remember one occasion in which a group of us had been making suggestions for a research project in social psychology, and Lewin, as was his way, had rushed to the board where he drew theoretical and topological diagrams for stating the issue in his terms, when suddenly he relaxed and with characteristic whimsicality remarked: "Theory is great, but we mustn't let it get in our way." The ultimate purpose of all theory, I can imagine him thinking to himself, is to be fruitful. One makes it as rigorous as one can. One develops topological and dynamic concepts for stating the basic systematic laws and one does this according to the best mathematical and logical traditions. But one does not press the resultant theoretical system too far—one leaves it in relatively schematic form. One develops the topological and dynamic constructs of the inner and outer life spaces and one predicts the resultant behavior from these, but one is aware that the constructs are mere constructs; and if, with the advance in empirical knowledge, the vector-topological derivations which result from such constructs no longer appear experimentally correct, one is ready to modify and improve upon them as may be necessary. Furthermore, one does not attempt at this stage of our science to give too precise quantifications. It is more important now to evolve a widely applicable, though quantitatively less precise system, than it is to evolve a quantitatively precise but very narrow system. If one must make the choice, one's theoretical assumptions should be of a sort to be widely suggestive and useful rather than of a sort to be highly precise but applicable only to a set of highly selected and artificially controlled facts.

The violent criticisms sometimes made of Lewin's theorizing cannot be ignored. These criticisms seem to have been of two main sorts. First there was the assertion that his dynamics and topology were mathematically or logically incorrect, and second there was the assertion that, while perhaps correct, nothing new could be derived from them. The first of these criticisms I do not feel competent to answer. But, in any event, perhaps it is not the one of major importance since it is certain that Lewin himself could, and would, have introduced the necessary modifica-

tions and corrections. (And now we can hope his students will do so.) The second criticisms seems to me the more crucial. Is it true as I have heard asserted—or as I myself have at times been tempted to believe—that the proper conceptualization of a given life-space is possible only after the behaviors which are supposed to result from it have already been observed? I believe that in the actual practice of Lewin and his students this indeed often seems to have been the case. They seem often to have observed a given behavior first and then afterwards merely to have intuited an appropriate life-space to explain it. But this criticism is, I think, but partially correct. It arises, I believe, mostly because certain of the steps in the thinking of Lewin and his students were often not explicitly stated. The conceptual system of topology and vectors obviously implies and requires in the end not only a set of principles whereby such and such individual and group life-space configurations will produce such and such behaviors but also a set of principles whereby the independent variables of environmental situation and given personality make-up will produce such and such inner and outer life-spaces. And it is this latter set of principles which Lewin and his students, while not denying, seem to have been least explicit about stating. For the present they seemed to have reasoned (consciously or unconsciously) that common sense will serve in lieu of formalized principles. One must first make sure that one's concepts of the psychological field are correct and useable before one wastes time on premature and at present inadequately formalizable statements of the complex and often very equivocal and impure laws whereby the 'alien' factors of environment and of personality lead to inner and outer life-spaces.

But far more important than any final precise evaluation of the details of Lewin's theoretical system was its extraordinary fruitfulness. It led to a list of some seventy experimental studies by him and his immediate students, not to mention also the host of studies by individuals working in other laboratories on such crucial concepts as: substitute goals, psychical satiation, level of aspiration, ego level, experimental forgetting, and the like.

Finally, no account of Lewin would be adequate which failed to emphasize the activities of his recent years in what he called 'Group Dynamics' and 'Action Research.' The notion that actual experiments on groups could be carried out under precisely controlled conditions could have come only from a man of Lewin's originality and courage. He and his students deserve immeasurable, never-ending credit for the opening up of this vista for a whole new realm of psychological investigation. None but the dull or the prejudiced could fail to be thrilled by their initial findings on the effects of authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire types of leadership upon small clubs of boys. And the new techniques and concepts which they developed and to which Lewin gave the name Group Dynamics (when then applied to the problems of workers in factories, of

war morale and eating habits, of hospital techniques and, finally, to community tensions arising out of majority-minority conflicts) are, to me, a one bright hope in an otherwise desperate social picture. And, finally, the concept of 'action research'—the carrying out of such group studies with the additional feature that key individuals in the actual social conflicts being investigated should themselves be drawn in as cooperating recorders, observers and analyzers—could have sprung only from both a truly courageous mind and a basically democratic spirit.

In the future history of our psychological era there are two names which, I believe, will stand out above all others: those of Freud and of Lewin. Freud will be revered for his first unravelling of the complexities of the individual history, and Lewin for his first envisioning of the dynamic laws according to which individuals behave as they do to their contemporaneous environments. Freud, the clinician, and Lewin, the experimentalist, these are the two men who will always be remembered because of the fact that their contrasting but complementary insights first made of psychology a science which was applicable both to real individuals and to real society.

KURT LEWIN

ALFRED J. MARROW

THE MONTHS HAVE PASSED since that sad day in February when deep sorrow struck the hearts of the friends and colleagues of Kurt Lewin. It still seems unreal to those of us who worked with him daily to talk about him as having departed. His everyday activities were so interwoven with our own, and the fluid inter-dependence which he maintained with his colleagues and students was so great, as we have continued our work, it has seemed to us as though he were continuously with us. The twenty or more projects under way at the Research Center, the fifteen or more projects under way at the Commission on Community Interrelations, (four of which have been reported at this annual meeting), the dozen or more projects under way in industry, have all been followed through as originally planned. His conceptualization and systematic theorization about which Professor Allport spoke so brilliantly were so far in advance of empirical research findings that, even after his passing, experimentation could continue to be guided by his scientific brilliance and profound insight.

During the last twelve years our activities became increasingly closer, and during the last five years of his life almost every aspect of his extremely active interests became involved with my own. His productivity during the last year was greater than that of any preceding year. He rested less frequently, ate less, and slept fewer hours. It was almost as though he felt that he was getting closer to the realization of a long-deferred goal, and his eagerness to achieve the goal grew in intensity as the distance to that goal decreased. During the last two months of his life he was almost obsessively occupied with the completion of his paper, "Frontiers in Group Dynamics," which was to appear in the first issue of HUMAN RELATIONS. He was equally excited about the future of this new publication which was dedicated to the integration of the social sciences and went one step further in group cooperation by integrating the scientific production of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London with that of the Research Center for Group Dynamics.

It was characteristic of him to persist with problems until he had evolved solutions for them. New projects and new assignments were always added to those that were already in operation. During the latter part of 1944, for example, he was attached to the O.S.S. in Washington. At the same time, he was continuing some of his departmental responsibility at the Child Welfare Station at Iowa. He continued his connection with the development of the research program of the Boy Scouts of America. He was involved in all of the administrative and management problems connected with the establishment of CCI. He was busy in

setting up the program and selecting personnel for the research center at MIT. He even found time to accept responsibility for directing all of the research of another foundation which had a budget of more than one hundred thousand dollars annually to establish a Training Center for Business Leaders in the area of group discipline in intergroup relations.

His ever-increased activities during his last years make it difficult to survey even sketchily in this paper more than a few of the specific areas. The MIT Center[1], for example, in October 1944 consisted of Lewin, part time and a secretary, full time; yet on his death just two and a half years later, it had expanded its personnel and projects so as to embrace almost every aspect of group living. Research was under way at the time of his death, and has continued uninterruptedly since then under the able direction of Dr. Cartwright and Dr. Lippitt, on the psychological and social problems of housing, on the training of community leaders in intergroup relations, on the origin of attitudes of discrimination in young children, on the psychological aspects of economic behavior, on the changing of food habits, on changing group productivity through conference and training techniques, and on intergroup distortions of perception, communication, and relationship among teachers, parents and adolescents.

Such a breathtaking sweep of scientific effort could have been achieved only by one with genuine confidence in the collaborative efforts of colleagues and students. The network of devoted friends and productive scientists he left behind attest to the profoundly human qualities which sustained his work. It was this combination of scientific genius and social character that almost spontaneously transformed his theories into action-research projects.

To understand his ever-expanding interests, one needs to understand the motivations and inspirations that influence the kind of experimentation which he pioneered. Lewin accepted the unknown, not as a mystery, but as a frontier toward which scientists must direct their challenges in order to better understand the social world about which so little is known. His approach, which was aimed at the discovery of the determining conditions of events, is obviously ideal for the scientist whose life as a scientist is integrated with his life as a citizen,—who wishes to pursue a scientific calling and at the same time direct his energies toward improvement in democratic community living. The field of action research was developed primarily to fulfill these needs of both the socially conscious individual who recognized that science will provide the only dependable guide to effective action and the scientist who wants his labors to be of maximum social usefulness, as well as of theoretical significance. It is this integration of scientific life with that of good citizenship which explains the reasons for a Research Center for Group Dynamics where, to use his own words, "the research would be devoted to the development of scientific concepts, methods, and theories of group life which should lead to a

[1] Now located at the University of Michigan.

deeper understanding and permit a more intelligent management of social problems in small and large settings." He constantly expressed regret at the wide gap of non-communication between socially minded laymen and social scientists; and he sought constantly to establish means of communication between the two groups. He was not sympathetic with the almost compulsive modesty of many social scientists. He was always ready to enter the community, the factory, the nursery, or the laboratory, to seek out experimentally a better understanding of the day to day problems that arise in the course of man's living with man. It seemed to me that there were three central themes that were continuous in almost every aspect of his life. These were:

First....His interdependent style of life, shown in constant involvement in cooperative enterprises and in continued collaboration with former students;

Second..his constant integration of theory and application, of his theorizing and ingenious experimentation, and even more in the close coordination of his seemingly abstruse theories with the affairs of everyday life—a degree of coordination achieved by no other scientist; and

Third...his successful integration of his scientific interests with his life as a person and a citizen, an integration which reached its highest point in his development and stimulation of the field of action research.

Lewin possessed an extraordinary talent for dramatizing social science to lay people and for making them understand how research could be scientifically meaningful and socially useful. He was one of the few scientists who knew how to promote lay support for social science research. This talent is all the more remarkable in the light of the difficulties which one might anticipate his theories would present to practical laymen. I have watched him explain to laymen, in terms of his theory of quasi-stationary equilibrium, the fallacy of controlling racial or religious prejudice through legal or police methods. He did it with such clarity that they understood him—just as he understood them. He was, as a result of this talent, highly successful in obtaining funds for his projects. This was instanced not only in his success in obtaining backing for CCI and the Research Center at MIT, but by the additional offers to direct other projects that were made to him almost constantly.

His friends and colleagues frequently discussed among themselves methods of discouraging him from adding to his work load. That we were not successful is evidenced by the excessive burden he was carrying at the time of his death. I personally had written to him early last winter that I was concerned about his health and that I would not participate in any additional venture which he undertook. This was written in answer to his letter to me telling about his excited plans for an international Jewish

research institute on human relations. His answer to me was that this was not a new venture, that it was related to a project we had worked together on during 1935 and 1936. At that time, Lewin had been considering an appointment to the faculty of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, Palestine. He was then convinced that a World War would occur as a result of the Hitler regime and that Palestine offered the only refuge for the Jews of Europe. As a citizen, he joined the Zionist movement, because he believed that as long as Jews were treated as gypsies and wanderers, they would never find security anywhere. As a scientist, he believed that the acculturation process in Palestine offered a most unique opportunity for the study of the inter-dependencies of group life. The Jews who were emigrating to Palestine differed from one another in their food habits, their language, methods of raising children, even in their practice of their own religion. Yet these people with different backgrounds and cultures were apparently establishing a form of group life that was emotionally satisfying and economically successful.

He was eager to accept the appointment, but agreed to do so only if sufficient finances were available to insure a minimum but adequate staff and laboratory. He even volunteered to assist in the raising of these funds. Under his direction an American committee was set up. The names of the persons on the committee reflect Lewin's success at dramatizing social science for lay people. The sponsor's committee, all of whom expressed great enthusiasm for the project, and who volunteered to help in every way possible, included such notable lay people as Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mrs. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Judge Felix Frankfurter, Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach. Among the scientists who joined with him were Franz Boas, William MacDougall, Adolf Meyer, and a host of others. Unfortunately, the European situation diverted the interest of the Americans interested in Palestine from problems of education to that of providing sustenance for the refugees who managed to escape Germany. The war years intervened, but Lewin never gave up thinking about the opportunity which Palestine provided for field experiments and action research in the various areas of group life. During the last three months of his life, he became active once again in the establishment of an international Jewish Research Foundation on human relations with emphasis on social living in Palestine. He believed that there must be a clearer recognition now than ever before of the inter-dependence of Jewish communities and of their problems in all parts of the world. Various forms of approach had been adopted by Jews in different parts of the world to the problems confronting them; some forms had met with failure while others had elements of success. It is important, therefore, he felt, not to treat the problem of any Jewish community as merely an isolated local phenomenon. A comparative approach—by revealing the similarities and variations in the situation of Jewish communities in various parts of the world, by analyzing the elements of failure and

success in the different forms of approach, by facilitating the development of action programs based on the experience of the various Jewries and guided by all that social science has to offer—only such an approach would aid the Jewish people in its striving for a creative survival and at the same time make a significant contribution to science.

I offered to assist in the creation of this international institute and plans are still being discussed for its possible establishment.

It was because of Lewin's democratic feelings that he devoted so much of his time to the minority problem. He believed that the survival of the Jewish people, culturally and physically depended upon an honest understanding of their own group life as a foundation for personal happiness as well as for satisfactory relations with other groups the world over. He frequently accepted invitations to speak before university groups on the minority problem and also wrote numerous articles for publication in this field. It was as a result of these talks and articles that the leadership of the American Jewish Congress heard of Lewin. This organization, which was organized in 1917 by Stephen S. Wise, Louis D. Brandeis, and many other leading American Jews at the request of President Woodrow Wilson, had devoted many of its activities in recent years to the protection of civic rights of all minority groups in the United States. The leadership of the organization was dissatisfied with its own program as well as the program of other agencies working to improve community relations and were eager to discover if social science had any solution to offer. They discussed the problem with Lewin and were deeply impressed with his insight and understanding. They invited him to draw up his own plan of a coordinated research and operational institute. He did so hesitantly, and at the same time enthusiastically. He hesitated because he knew that, unlike the physical scientist who need feel no responsibility to see that his discoveries are applied, he would be responsible for overcoming social resistance in applying his findings. He realized too that research problems would not always be those he wished to select. He would have to consider instead the community interest, because society will not support or apply the results of research if they do not meet community felt needs. He would have to state the problem, not only in objective scientific terms, but also in terms of the way in which the community evaluates its problems.

The selection of the problem too would be just the first step in his relationship to the community. The reactions of lay collaborators and sponsors, as well as the reaction to the public, would have to be considered in every step of the research. At every level of his work commencing with the selection of the problem and proceeding to its specific formulation, and continuing on through the presentation of his findings and recommedations for application at all of these levels of work, the research staff would have to concern itself with the community as intently as it did with its research. His enthusiasm overcame his hesitancy. He finally

agreed in the Fall of 1944 to direct the establishment and operation of what is now known as CCI. A sum of one million dollars was to be made available to CCI over a period of years. This was not an endowment but an expenditures allowance. Before office space was obtained, or desks purchased, the Seaside Incident occurred and CCI was forced into its first action research project. Even though the staff consisted of but one person, the project was undertaken and its accomplishments, despite hardships, can be judged from the report appearing in the first issue of HUMAN RELATIONS, entitled "Prejudice in Seaside."

It should not be assumed that because CCI is not affiliated with any university that it is just applying social science and therefore there will not emerge important scientific constructs from its work. Lewin believed that he derived significant constructs for facilitating group change out of the applied field experiments on food habits, and that other important constructs would evolve from the action research at CCI. The four papers on CCI projects presented at this meeting represent only a part of on-going research under the direction of Stuart Cook aided by Isidor Chein and John Harding and the balance of the CCI staff.

Lewin stated in a paper describing the need for the Research Center, that "to manage a plant or factory, it does not suffice to know accounting or how to set up efficient production lines; but that the cultural habits of the worker in the district in question, the leadership techniques and the social atmosphere in the factory, are not less important." It was with this point of view that he visited the Harwood plant in 1939. At that time one of the most serious problems faced by this industry, as well as most other industries, was absenteeism and turnover. It was recognized that part of this problem was caused by the resistance of production workers to necessary changes in methods and jobs. The transfer problem, as it was called, creates the resistance for which no solution had been found. Workers are changed because any absence on the assembly line means that someone from elsewhere in the plant must be moved to fill the vacancy. Likewise, style and model changes for which American industry is noted, requires frequent changes in the layout of the line. This resistance expressed itself in low production, restriction of output, aggression against management, high turnover, frequent absences and grievances about the rates. Efforts to solve this serious problem by the use of special pay allowance for transfer, by making necessary layoffs on the basis of efficiency, and the use of standard reward and punishment techniques did little or nothing to overcome the resistance to change.

Lewin came to the plant as a visitor and so was not treated with the hostility that a visiting psychologist might have encountered if he arrived in the role of expert or consultant. Despite his visitor's status, he very quickly became involved in some of the deep-rooted problems of industrial management. In several unforgettable face-to-face discussions with members of the production staff, he slowly outlined his theory.

Prior to Lewin's visit to the plant, the psychological applications had been confined to the use and development of selection tests. Under his direction, Bavelas, and later French, conducted a series of experiments, mostly unpublished, over a period of four years, which changed significantly the management policy of the company and partially overcame the resistance to change in the "transfer situation." Procedures were introduced that involved worker participation in group decisions, leadership training, training of trainers.

Labor turnover and absenteeism, Lewin theorized, might be a symptom of feeling of failure in many cases, rather than a result of the stereotyped excuses that were offered. This was a surprising observation since in no single case of exit interview in the company's history, up to that time, had any worker mentioned a feeling of failure to meet production quotas as a cause for quitting. Yet the research that followed Lewin's hypothesis revealed that not a single one of 116 experienced operators who were rating above the production standard had quit during the month, whereas 28 out of the 211 who rated below the standard had quit during that same period. Further examination of these same data reveal the fact that the rate of turnover increased as the worker approached the standard of an experienced worker. It was assumed that this was due to increasing frustration as the workers approached their goal. This frustration was produced by the conflict of two factors:

A. The strength of his desires to reach his goal increasing as he approached it—a typical goal gradient behavior.

B. On the other hand, the difficulty of increasing production grew greater as the distance to the goal decreased. Thus the higher the level of production, the greater difficulty of increasing production.

Research continues at the plant and it is significant that there has been no serious conflict between management and worker since 1939. When Lewin made his first visit, the plant had not been unionized, and since then has joined a national union. Nevertheless, cooperation has replaced friction in many areas that were formerly strife provoking.

Aside from the industrial significance of Lewin's work, there emerges again that incomparable ability at dramatizing social science with lay people. At this plant, all of the workers, including the staff, were native born Americans from the mountain country in Virginia. They would certainly regard with great suspicion, under normal circumstances, a foreign accented college professor of psychology with no industrial experience. Yet, just as happened at the University, he crossed the barriers of geography and language. They loved him for his good humor, his patience, his warmth. They respected him for his eagerness to learn and his capacity to creatively restructure their thinking and to fuse it with his own. Here again we have strikingly manifested the central theme that run through all of Lewin's activities.

1. His ability to dramatize social science to lay leaders.
2. His inter-dependence with people, whether they be factory foremen or nationally known scientists, and
3. His scientific knowledge which he was ready to use for socially useful purposes.

It was these themes which dominated both his thinking and his actions, and I can think of no more appropriate way of closing this last tribute of memory than to repeat the quotation from the Talmudic sage Hillel, which quotation Lewin thought symbolized best the problem of minority group member, whether that group be social scientist, racial or religious, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me—if I am for myself only, what am I—and if not now—when?"